

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 153

AN ACT

To promote veteran involvement in STEM education, computer science, and scientific research, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Supporting Veterans
3 in STEM Careers Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

5 In this Act:

6 (1) **DIRECTOR.**—The term “Director” means
7 the Director of the National Science Foundation.

8 (2) **FOUNDATION.**—The term “Foundation”
9 means the National Science Foundation.

10 (3) **STEM.**—The term “STEM” has the mean-
11 ing given the term in section 2 of the America COM-
12 PETES Reauthorization Act of 2010 (42 U.S.C.
13 6621 note).

14 (4) **VETERAN.**—The term “veteran” has the
15 meaning given the term in section 101 of title 38,
16 United States Code.

17 **SEC. 3. SUPPORTING VETERANS IN STEM EDUCATION AND**
18 **COMPUTER SCIENCE.**

19 (a) **SUPPORTING VETERAN INVOLVEMENT IN SCI-**
20 **ENTIFIC RESEARCH AND STEM EDUCATION.**—The Di-
21 rector shall, through the research and education activities
22 of the Foundation, encourage veterans to study and pur-
23 sue careers in STEM and computer science, in coordina-
24 tion with other Federal agencies that serve veterans.

25 (b) **VETERAN OUTREACH PLAN.**—Not later than 180
26 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director

1 shall submit to the Committee on Science, Space, and
2 Technology of the House of Representatives and the Com-
3 mittee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the
4 Senate a plan for how the Foundation can enhance its out-
5 reach efforts to veterans. Such plan shall—

6 (1) report on the Foundation’s existing out-
7 reach activities;

8 (2) identify the best method for the Foundation
9 to leverage existing authorities and programs to fa-
10 cilitate and support veterans in STEM careers and
11 studies, including teaching programs; and

12 (3) include options for how the Foundation
13 could track veteran participation in research and
14 education programs of the Foundation, and describe
15 any barriers to collecting such information.

16 (c) NATIONAL SCIENCE BOARD INDICATORS RE-
17 PORT.—The National Science Board shall provide in its
18 annual report on indicators of the state of science and en-
19 gineering in the United States any available and relevant
20 data on veterans in science and engineering careers or
21 education programs.

22 (d) ROBERT NOYCE TEACHER SCHOLARSHIP PRO-
23 GRAM UPDATE.—Section 10 of the National Science
24 Foundation Authorization Act of 2002 (42 U.S.C. 1862n-
25 1) is amended—

1 (1) in subsection (a)(5)—

2 (A) in subparagraph (A), by striking
3 “and” at the end;

4 (B) in subparagraph (B), by striking the
5 period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

6 (C) by adding at the end the following:

7 “(C) higher education programs that serve
8 or support veterans.”;

9 (2) in subsection (b)(2)(F)—

10 (A) by striking “and students” and insert-
11 ing “, students”; and

12 (B) by inserting “, and veterans” before
13 the period at the end;

14 (3) in subsection (c)(2), by inserting “and vet-
15 erans” before the period at the end; and

16 (4) in subsection (d)(2), by inserting “and vet-
17 erans” before the period at the end.

18 (e) NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION TEACHING
19 FELLOWSHIPS AND MASTER TEACHING FELLOWSHIPS
20 UPDATE.—Section 10A(d) of the National Science Foun-
21 dation Authorization Act of 2002 (42 U.S.C. 1862n-
22 1a(d)) is amended—

23 (1) in paragraph (3)(F)—

24 (A) by striking “and individuals” and in-
25 serting “, individuals”; and

1 (B) by inserting “, and veterans” before
2 the period at the end; and

3 (2) in paragraph (4)(B), by inserting “and vet-
4 erans” before the period at the end.

5 (f) NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION COMPUTER
6 AND NETWORK SECURITY CAPACITY BUILDING GRANTS
7 UPDATE.—Section 5(a) of the Cyber Security Research
8 and Development Act (15 U.S.C. 7404(a)) is amended—

9 (1) in paragraph (1), by inserting “and stu-
10 dents who are veterans” after “these fields”; and

11 (2) in paragraph (3)—

12 (A) in subparagraph (I), by striking “and”
13 at the end;

14 (B) by redesignating subparagraph (J) as
15 subparagraph (K); and

16 (C) by inserting after subparagraph (I) the
17 following:

18 “(J) creating opportunities for veterans to
19 transition to careers in computer and network
20 security; and”.

21 (g) GRADUATE TRAINEESHIPS IN COMPUTER AND
22 NETWORK SECURITY RESEARCH UPDATE.—Section
23 5(c)(6)(C) of the Cyber Security Research and Develop-
24 ment Act (15 U.S.C. 7404(c)(6)(C)) is amended by insert-
25 ing “or veterans” after “disciplines”.

1 (h) VETERANS AND MILITARY FAMILIES STEM
2 EDUCATION INTERAGENCY WORKING GROUP.—

3 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the Office of
4 Science and Technology Policy shall establish, or
5 designate, an interagency working group to improve
6 veteran and military spouse equity and representa-
7 tion in STEM fields.

8 (2) DUTIES OF INTERAGENCY WORKING
9 GROUP.—An interagency working group established
10 under paragraph (1) shall develop and facilitate the
11 implementation by participating agencies of a stra-
12 tegic plan, which shall—

13 (A) specify and prioritize short- and long-
14 term objectives;

15 (B) specify the common metrics that will
16 be used by Federal agencies to assess progress
17 toward achieving such objectives;

18 (C) identify barriers veterans face in reen-
19 tering the workforce, including a lack of formal
20 STEM education, career guidance, and the
21 process of transferring military credits and
22 skills to college credits;

23 (D) identify barriers military spouses face
24 in establishing careers in STEM fields;

1 (E) describe the approaches that each par-
2 ticipating agency will take to address adminis-
3 tratively the barriers described in subpara-
4 graphs (C) and (D); and

5 (F) identify any barriers that require Fed-
6 eral or State legislative or regulatory changes in
7 order to be addressed.

8 (3) REPORT.—The Director of the Office of
9 Science and Technology Policy shall—

10 (A) not later than 1 year after the date of
11 enactment of this Act, submit to Congress the
12 strategic plan required under paragraph (2);
13 and

14 (B) include in the annual report required
15 by section 101(d) of the America COMPETES
16 Reauthorization Act of 2010 (42 U.S.C.
17 6621(d)) a description of any progress made in
18 carrying out the activities described in para-
19 graph (2) of this subsection.

20 (4) SUNSET.—An interagency working group
21 established under paragraph (1) shall terminate on
22 the date that is 3 years after the date that it is es-
23 tablished.

1 **SEC. 4. COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES**
2 **STUDY AND REPORT ON BARRIERS FACED BY**
3 **STUDENT VETERANS PURSUING DEGREES IN**
4 **SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, OR**
5 **MATH.**

6 (a) **STUDY.**—Not later than August 1, 2022, the
7 Comptroller General of the United States shall complete
8 a study on academic success rates of student veterans pur-
9 suing covered degrees and barriers faced by such students
10 in pursuing such degrees.

11 (b) **ELEMENTS.**—The study required by subsection
12 (a) shall include the following:

13 (1) Assessment of available information on the
14 percentage or number of student veterans pursuing
15 a covered degree with educational assistance fur-
16 nished under chapter 33 of title 38, United States
17 Code.

18 (2) Assessment of available information on the
19 percentage or number of such students who pursue
20 a covered degree and do not obtain such degree in
21 four or fewer academic years.

22 (3) Identification of the reasons that such stu-
23 dents do not obtain such degree in four or fewer
24 academic years and whether such reasons are bar-
25 riers to obtaining such degrees.

1 (4) Development of recommendations for legis-
2 lative or administrative action to better align the
3 educational assistance furnished under chapter 33 of
4 title 38, United States Code, with the needs of such
5 students and address the reasons identified under
6 paragraph (3).

7 (c) REPORT.—Not later than August 1, 2022, the
8 Comptroller General shall submit to Congress a report on
9 the findings of the Comptroller General with respect to
10 the study completed under subsection (a), along with rec-
11 ommendations for such legislative or administrative action
12 as the Comptroller General considers appropriate.

13 (d) DEFINITION OF COVERED DEGREE.—In this sec-
14 tion, the term “covered degree” means a standard, under-
15 graduate college degree in a field listed under section
16 3320(b)(4)(A)(i) of title 38, United States Code.

Passed the Senate December 18, 2019.

Attest:

Secretary.

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